Decline in foreign tourist arrival

825. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that arrival of foreign tourists have considerably decreased during the last three years;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has chalked out any plan to attract foreign tourists; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when those measures are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) The number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India has increased from 4.45 million in 2006 to 5.08 million in 2007 and 5.37 million in 2008.

(c) and (d) Development and promotion of tourism is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism extends Central Financial Assistance for project proposals submitted by the State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations that are complete as per scheme guidelines, subject to availability of funds and *inter-se priority*.

The steps taken by the Government to attract more foreign tourists to India include:

- Development of tourism infrastructure at tourist sites with the cooperation of other Ministries/ Departments and State/ UT Governments;
- Focusing on growth of hotel infrastructure, particularly that for budget hotels;
- Enhancing connectivity through augmentation of air capacity and improving road infrastructure to major tourist attractions;
- Direct approach to the consumers through electronic and print media through the "Incredible India" Campaign;
- Production and distribution of publicity material;
- Direct co-operative marketing with the airlines, tour operators and wholesalers in overseas markets;
- According greater focus to the emerging markets, particularly of China, North East Asia and South East Asia;
- Participation in Trade Fairs and Exhibitions;
- Use of internet and web marketing; and
- Re-inforced hospitality programmes including grant of air passages to invite media personnel, tour operators on familiarization tours to India to get first hand knowledge on various tourism products.

Foreign exchange earned from tourism

826. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state: